

To: A. Klug

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Dr. C. Friend
Center for Experimental Cell Biology
The Mount Sinai Medical Center
One Gustave L. Levy Place
New York, NY 10029

Dear Dr. Friend,

Yes, you are right that Rosalind became friends of both my wife and myself, but of course we were never as close to her as the Klug's were.

I now see what the trouble is. You apparently believe Rosalind was a first-rate scientist. I think she was a good experimentalist but certainly not of the first rank. She was simply not in the same class as Eigen or Bragg or Pauling, nor was she as good as Dorothy Hodgkin. She did not even select DNA to study. It was given to her. Her theoretical crystallography was very average. That was partly why she and Aaron Klug made such a good combination.

I don't think Rosalind "obstructed progress" any more than most people do. What I object to is the artificial inflation of her reputation by women who do not fully understand her work and often did not know her personally. Rosalind would have been the first person to object to this misguided movement to make her a martyr.

First-class scientists take risks. Rosalind, it seems to me, was too cautious. She would only take small ones. It is fatal to strive too hard for soundness, though there's usually no need to be deliberately sloppy.

I'll let you know when I hear from Aaron Klug, but I don't expect a very quick reply. I imagined he groaned when he got my letter.

Yours sincerely,

FHCC/bml

F. H. C. Crick